

Doings In The Sporting World

NOT ALL GREAT BALL PLAYERS ARE HEAVY BATTERS

By TOMMY CLARK.

IS it necessary to be a heavy batter in order to become a great ball player? This was the subject of conversation among a number of baseball experts recently. Opinions were divided. When one scans over the long list of great ball tossers you will find that a majority of them have been heavy hitters, but it isn't universal truth that hitting ability is necessary to make a player great. The pitchers may be eliminated from the question, for they do enough to make themselves famous without considering the big stick. While Christy Mathewson is a good batter, he nevertheless would be a great figure in the national game if he never made a hit with the wagon tongue. The same is true of Rusie, Radbourne, Bender, Young, Brown and a host of other pitchers past and present.

If a case be needed of a great player who never won renown as a batter, there is Jimmy McAleer, now manager of the Washington Americans. As a proficient outfielder none ever excelled McAleer, and he wasn't a good hitter. The late Frank De Haas Robison, president of the Cleveland club, used to say that McAleer was of more value to his club by his supreme ability to cut off hits than any batter was by his ability to drive runs in. With a defensive player who can do so much to prevent runs the rest of the team can be expected to produce runs.

Fielder Jones, Bid McPhee, Fred Pfeffer, McCarthy, Herman Long, Jimmy Collins, Johnny Evers and Roger Bresnahan, none of them star hitters year in and year out, though several of those named are good hitters, achieved greatness more from generalship, fielding ability to plan and execute and be a winning unit in the whole rather than by hitting. Cobb, Lajoie, Wagner, Speaker, Chase and E. Collins could be less able hitters than they are and still be great players. Anson was great because of his batting and leadership, Delehanty because of his batting, Jennings, Keeler, Williamson, Kelly, Speaker, Chance, Lange and Clarke came to diamond greatness because of all around ability.

There are many players today in fast company who are called weak hitters, but who are invaluable to their teams. For instance, take Bobby Wallace of the St. Louis Americans. For many years Bobby has been classed as one of the brainiest players in the major leagues. It is his great knowledge of inside ball that holds the Browns' infield together. It is he that coaches the outfielders. Without him the team would probably go to pieces. There are also many others. Miller Huggins of the St. Louis Cardinals, McBride of the Washingtons, Tannehill of the Chicago Americans, Bridwell of the New York Nationals and Bobby Byrne of the Pirates—all these fellows are what you would call weak hitters, but nevertheless they are invaluable to their teams on account of their great ability to plan and execute.

Change Benefited Pitchers.

The fact that Burns and Suggs are pitching winning ball in the National league does indicate that the old league is not as fast as the American. True, Burns and Suggs did not perform brilliantly in the junior organization, though it was always conceded that Pitcher Burns was a pitcher of class. He seems to be taking more interest in his work now than formerly, probably because an inducement has been made him to do so. Suggs' success is a real surprise, for he was not much of a pitcher for Detroit.

But, speaking of American league pitchers making good in the National league, there are also several National league cast offs starring in the American league. There is Karger, for instance. He was let out because he could not win and drifted to a minor league, from which Boston secured him. The same is true of young Cy Young, now with the Chicago White Sox, and incidentally with Hall of Boston, who could not pitch winning ball for Cincinnati, nor even Columbus, for that matter.

So the fact that a pitcher falls in one league and makes good in another does not necessarily give a line on the relative strength of the two leagues.

Hats Off to Cy Young.

When Young, the veteran pitcher of the Cleveland Americans, won his five hundredth game recently he established a mark that will stand for years to come. Think of Cy's record. It means an average of twenty-five winning games for twenty years. Nowadays if some of our well groomed gentlemen pitchers twirl twenty-five games they are doing well. The veteran has won close to forty games a year more than once, and that's more than nine-tenths of the twirlers of today are asked to pitch, much less win. A wonderful old heart of oak is this sturdy old lad.

Cobb and Wagner.

Just now the two greatest stars of baseball are said to be disgruntled with their lot in life. Ty Cobb is said to have resented a call from Hugh Jennings, while Hans Wagner is accused of playing indifferent ball because he has tired of the game.

The chances are that there is little foundation for either report. Wagner undoubtedly has not been going along at the clip he set in the former season, and this fact has been instrumental in the Pirates making a poor showing. But there is no reason for believing that he is intentionally shirking his duty. Wagner is not that kind, and, while he may be in the throes of a slump, it is safe to say that he is always trying his best.

As for Cobb, he, no doubt, is just like every other member of the Detroit team—irritable and sore because of the Tigers' failure to win. When a ball team has for three successive years shared in the receipts of the world's series and then suddenly finds that plum slipping from its grasp it is going to have some sort of an effect on the players. Cobb is no different from any of the others, and it is because of



WEAK HITTERS, BUT GOOD MEN OTHERWISE

have caused dismay to less able leaders had they been forced to abide a championship race with it.

But McGraw takes anything and gets results. He has even succeeded in making an acceptable first baseman of Merkle, who for months batted very weakly and did but ordinary work around first cushion. But McGraw gets unity into the efforts of his men and something besides, one hardly knows what. He Jenningsizes them besides injecting the baseball. And they make good.

Many and oft is the time that misfortune has rapped this leader over the knuckles and broken up a combination that had a fine chance. But McGraw never let his club sink to the bottom. Once, two years ago, when the mighty Matty went wrong along with all the rest of the club, the Giants rattled down to about sixth or seventh place. But here they halted, turned about and climbed up within one game of first place. It was the toughest kind of a break that gave Chicago the winning game, and Merkle made it.

McGraw's secret is that he makes his men understand that he knows more than they do.

Better Umpiring Needed.

The umpiring in the National league last year was high class. There were several protested games, but only one protest was sustained, and the work of the arbitrators gave better satisfaction than that of the present staff.

President Lynch has already seen fit to oust one of his officials, and there is at least one other man on the staff who is not worthy of the title.

There is no doubt that better umpiring would improve the game, and in this connection a suggestion has been made that sounds good. Why not have former players do all the umpiring? It is pointed out that Bill Dineen has had less trouble this year than any other member of Ban Johnson's staff. The players have been more inclined to accept Dineen's mistakes as a part of the game and to credit him with making every effort to do his best.

That is his reputation as a pitcher—he always did his best for the team to which his services belonged. In consequence a good umpire has been added to the exceedingly small supply of that kind of material, and with each week Dineen is sure to improve as an official as he acquires greater experience. From the public's viewpoint, too, there is far less desire to roast a man who has won the public plaudits for years as a player.

President Lynch has appointed Max Eason, a former Brooklyn pitcher, to take Augie Moran's place on the National league corps. Looks like a move in the right direction. It is said that Heine Peltz has also filed an application for a position and that next spring Fred Tenney will ask for a place on the staff. These men should be accommodated. Both were good ball players, and both know the game. Peltz was never a fast ball player, but he was a shrewd one and won many games with his head. He was for some time a respected member of the Pittsburgh team. He was always in dead earnest about his work and was very popular with the fans. The same can be said of Tenney.

There is need of higher salaries than have been paid umpires until recent years in order to tempt reputable players who have been stars to remain in the sport as umpires, but it will prove money well invested if the league will raise their umpires' salaries high enough to keep star players in the game after their playing days are over. Think of an umpire staff made up of men like Tommy Leach, "Three Fingers" Brown, Christy Mathewson, Johnny Kling, Napoleon Lajoie and players of that class!

SLUMPS UNEXPLAINABLE.

Even if Good Reasons Are Presented Many Fans Will Not Believe Them.

Commenting on the complaints of the fans of various teams when the latter take the inevitable slump, as happened to so many this season, a prominent writer says:

"As a matter of fact, no matter how lucid a reply is given, it is not given much credence, for when a team is in the throes of a losing streak few are the fans who do not have their own opinions as to the contributory causes, and few also are the ones who fail to express them.

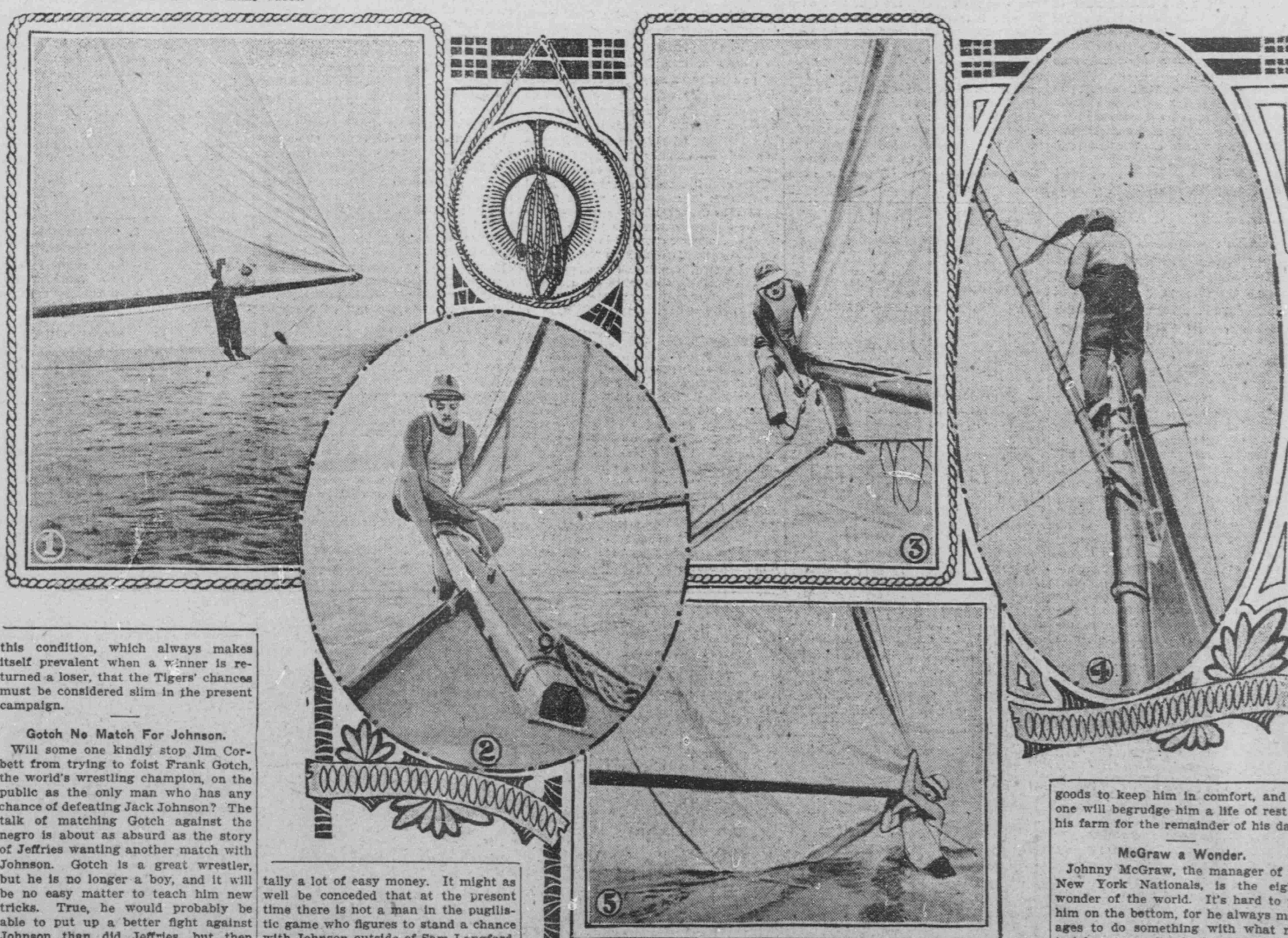
"It is beyond dispute, however, that none of the teams is having very easy sledding this season. The pace is a hot one, despite the fact that some of the teams have suffered from almost unprecedented slumps. The gap between first and last places has never been as wide to date as is usual at this stage of the campaign, and even now the team which occupies the cellar position is not so far behind but that a spurt of a week or two on its part and a corresponding slump on the part of the leader would materially change the aspect of the race and the final chances of the contenders.

"It is likely that the National league campaign for 1910 will go down into sporting history as one of the most peculiar in the entire history of the old organization. Its surprises, both pleasant and unpleasant, have been numerous, and it is no certainty that they are ended or will be ended until the close of the season is much nearer.

"Baseball is a game in which the unexpected plays a large part. In truth, it is this vagueness, this uncertainty, which is half the game's charm. For instance, if the fans of a city knew when the campaign opened that their representatives would finish in last place what would be the team's drawing power at home? Practically nil. On the other hand, if the patrons of another city knew in advance that their favorites would win it would detract from the zest of the contests. But one can never tell. Hope is ever present, even when all the odds in the book tends to prove that there is no chance for victory."

✧ Snapshots Showing Some of the Dangers of Yacht Racing ✧

Snapshot No. 1 shows a yachtsman in a dangerous position out on the spinnaker boom while under way. The temporary nature of the spinnaker boom renders it necessarily unsteady, and a man is likely to be thrown off into the water. No. 2 shows a seaman out on the bowsprit adjusting the jib down haul while the yacht is lunging into a heavy, rushing sea. No. 3 reveals the yachtsman out on the end of the boom, stretching the mainsail out while under way. The swinging of the big spar is a constant menace. No. 4 illustrates the safe mode of standing while aloft to make repairs. No. 5 shows the highly dangerous task of effecting the proper adjustment of a huge, bellying spinnaker while under way. The daring yachtsman, who is L. DeR. Handley, the famous swimmer of the New York Athletic club, has been thrown into the water from the end of the swaying spinnaker boom of the swift racing sloop Crescent, with which he has won many races.



this condition, which always makes itself prevalent when a winner is returned a loser, that the Tigers' chances must be considered slim in the present campaign.

Gotch No Match For Johnson.

Will some one kindly stop Jim Corbett from trying to foist Frank Gotch, the world's wrestling champion, on the public as the only man who has any chance of defeating Jack Johnson? The talk of matching Gotch against the negro is about as absurd as the story of Jeffries wanting another match with Johnson. Gotch is a great wrestler, but he is no longer a boy, and it will be no easy matter to teach him new tricks. True, he would probably be able to put up a better fight against Johnson than did Jeffries, but then that does not prove anything.

In their search for some one to beat Johnson Corbett and his friends are going to make a wonderful reputation for the colored champion and incidentally a lot of easy money. It might as well be conceded that at the present time there is not a man in the pugilistic game who figures to stand a chance with Johnson outside of Sam Langford. A few years of idleness and dissipation may give several a chance, but just now he has the stage to himself. Gotch would be foolish to think of entering the prize ring. He has made a

wonderful reputation as a wrestler, and he could lose all this in a single encounter with Johnson. As for Jeffries wanting another fight,

there are reasons for believing that he has already had one fight too many. He will hardly attempt to re-enter the ring. He has enough of the world's

goods to keep him in comfort, and no one will begrudge him a life of rest on his farm for the remainder of his days.

McGraw a Wonder.

Johnny McGraw, the manager of the New York Nationals, is the eighth wonder of the world. It's hard to put him on the bottom, for he always manages to do something with what material comes to hand. Outside of Christy Mathewson, McGraw's pitchers have not been remarkable except for their eccentricity. His catching staff has not been regarded as more than average, and his team as a whole would